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30 September 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training  
 FROM : Chief, Career Training Program  
 SUBJECT : Career Training Program Situation Report

1. As noted in my recent Activity Reports, we face the prospect of a shortfall in the October class. This would be no great cause for concern if it were a one-time occurrence, but it appears to reflect a trend which, if not checked, will get us into serious trouble. Our problem, briefly stated, is that the recruitment and processing mechanism is not keeping pace with the requirements of an expanded program. With a quarterly input requirement (four classes per year) and a 3½ - to 5 - month processing cycle, we have a built-in deficit factor which is beginning to overtake us.

2. The main factors in the situation are as follows:

a. In FY 1965 the recruiters sent us 1,054 new applicants. This was an increase of 35% over FY 1964's total of 781 and I believe it represents about the maximum number that we can expect in FY 1966. In the face of pressing new requirements elsewhere in the Agency, plus a tightening employment market, a staff of 14 field recruiters will be hard put to do as well again.

b. In FY 1965 we had 218 applications from internal candidates. This was an unusually large number, occasioned to a considerable extent by ceiling cut-backs in 1964 - 1965 which limited or eliminated opportunities for young employees in many components. The prospects for FY 1966 are not as good. As of 9 September we have 60 applicants under consideration and our best estimate is that the total for FY 1966 will not exceed 150. The rate of direct hires has been declining for some time, particularly during the past two years, thus reducing the number of potential internal candidates; and now two further factors, growing workload pressures and an improved ceiling situation, are tending to eliminate or postpone many applications.

c. In FY 1965, out of a combined input of 1,054 external and 218 internal applicants, plus a carry-over from June 1964 of 68 cleared candidates, we entered a total of ████████ trainees in four

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classes. This represented a "take" of about 12% or one out of eight of the external applicants and 30%, or one out of three-plus, of the internals. We began FY 1966 with a carry-over of 60 cleared candidates, and anticipate from 60 to 100 fewer applicants if all present trends continue unchanged. If the same "take" ratio continues, it will be statistically impossible to make our programmed level of 225.

d. The average processing time in FY 1965 was about 3½ months which, I believe, was an all-time low in the history of the program. Yet, with this relatively favorable average waiting period, we lost about 20% of our external candidates through withdrawal of their applications or declination of appointment. Indications to date are that the impact of additional and "crash" requirements, particularly upon the Office of Security, will lengthen the clearance time for the foreseeable future.

3. I believe it is generally agreed that the Agency's long-term interests require that the "pipeline" of young professional talent be kept filled. However, to maintain our programmed level we must increase the number of applicants, or increase our "take" from the total number under consideration, or effect some combination of the two. I think we can do a better job on both counts. Outlined in paragraph four below are actions which we have taken or are in the process of developing, and in paragraph five two recommendations for further action.

4. We can stimulate more applications and hold more candidates through the clearance process by:

a. Prompt and positive expression of interest in the individual as soon as possible after the recruiter's interview. Many good candidates delay submission of the application forms while they think the matter over, and the first few weeks following initial contact thus become crucial. On a selective basis, aimed at getting the outstandingly good prospect, particularly in areas where the recruiter may identify several candidates during a recruitment visit, I propose that a Program Officer from the Career Training Staff follow up with on-the-spot interviews in the field. This will reinforce the recruitment effort, serve as a preliminary screening, and demonstrate to the desirable candidate the seriousness of our interest. It also will cut several days or weeks off the processing time, and will save the cost of invitee travel on those who do not warrant further consideration. We are developing with the Recruitment Division plans for a pilot effort this autumn. Travel funds already budgeted will suffice for this Fiscal Year.

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b. Participation with the Office of Personnel and appropriate operating offices in identifying candidates possessing qualifications of particular importance to the Agency, and developing joint recruitment efforts. For example, we are assisting currently in developing target rosters of American students of Chinese.

c. Speed-up of Headquarters paper processing, and further use of interim letters to reassure and hold the interest of the candidate while awaiting clearance. We have worked out with the Office of Personnel procedural changes which are beginning to show substantial improvement. Files are moving rapidly, new "GTP interest" letters are going out promptly, and we are shortening by two to three weeks the time required to bring a candidate in for preliminary interviews and processing.

d. Further use of advertising to stimulate more applications. Results of the two ads tried thus far in FY 1966 have been encouraging, and we advocate a more extensive effort. Action is being taken by the Personnel Recruitment Division.

e. Reissuance of a Headquarters Notice on the internal program, reminding employees of the developmental opportunities it affords. The text is in the hands of the Regulations Control Staff for publication.

5. The effectiveness of these actions will depend largely upon the vigor with which we can pursue them. Items 4a and b will place a further demand upon staff time. Our present staff of six officers will find it difficult to take on extra work, but I am persuaded that action along these lines is needed. We have enough space, and we have operating funds for this fiscal year; what we need is two additional Program Officers. That much more help will make possible the time and attention in individual cases which so often makes the difference between getting or losing a good man. But all the foregoing steps, however essential, deal somewhat indirectly with our most immediate and serious problem, the number of qualified applicants who withdraw or decline appointment. I am convinced that the biggest reason for the loss rate is our inability to make firm employment offers in time to meet the competition. I believe we could save a significant number of cases, including some of our best qualified applicants, if we were able to employ certain selected individuals on a Provisional Clearance basis. We have discussed this informally with representatives of Security, Personnel and Cover Staff, and there appear to be no serious objections. Procedural controls can be arranged which will minimize the risks involved, and there are enough worthwhile, unclassified assignments available including particularly the foreign language training to occupy the time of the persons so employed.

I recommend that the Deputy Director for Support be asked to approve:

- a. The employment of selected Career Trainees on a Provisional clearance basis;
- b. The allocation of two Program Officer positions for the Career Training Program Staff.

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